

DOG FOULING

Experts estimate that dogs in the UK produce 1000 tonnes of faeces every day. Therefore, it is not surprising that dog fouling is a major issue in many areas.

Did you know...

Ø 95% of the British public are worried by the amount of dog fouling in public places

Ø You can contract Toxocariasis from dog mess, which could lead to blindness

Ø 94% of councils employ a Dog Warden

Ø 54% of dog owners stated that they had neither bought nor used worming tablets on their pets

Ø The annual cost of cleaning up dog mess in England is £22 million

Ø Around 1400 owners were prosecuted in England between November 2003 and March 2004

Ø It is illegal to allow your dog to foul in public and not clean it up and you can be fined £50 on the spot or prosecuted through the courts.

Ø The penalty for not clearing up dog fouling can be up to £1,000

TOXOCARIASIS

Infection with the worm *Toxocara canis* is called Toxocariasis. Many dogs (between 10-40% of adults, and up to 70% of puppies, in surveys conducted in urban areas) have the worm present in their body but they may show no external signs of disease. However, these dogs periodically pass the egg stage of the worm in their faeces and so contaminate the environment and act as a source of infection for spread to other animals and humans.

Toxocara canis is a roundworm that can grow to up to 18cms in length. These worms live in the small intestine of dogs. There are no specific breed predispositions. All dogs can be infected by *Toxocara canis* and puppies are often infected before they are born.

Large numbers of worm eggs are found in the environment in areas used by dogs for toilet purposes – e.g. grass verges, public parks, kennel areas.

Medical records show that approximately 100 new cases of Toxocariasis are diagnosed each year. This disease can cause lesions in the brain, liver, eye, kidney, and lungs.

Children, especially toddlers, crawl on grass in gardens and parks. They may pick up the *Toxocara canis* eggs on their hands and then put fingers in their mouths.